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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/954,838	09/12/2001	D. Keith Jones	8S08.1-162	8157
23506	7590	05/05/2004	EXAMINER	
GARDNER GROFF, P.C. PAPER MILL VILLAGE, BUILDING 23 600 VILLAGE TRACE SUITE 300 MARIETTA, GA 30067			CHIN SHUE, ALVIN C	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3634		
DATE MAILED: 05/05/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/954,838	JONES, D. KEITH
	Examiner Alvin C. Chin-Shue	Art Unit 3634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 February 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 9-11,13-18 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 9-11,13-17 and 21 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 9,13-16, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Wagner or Ostrobrod (with respect to claims 9,13-16) in view of Knots, Ascherin, or Krammerer. Wagner and Ostrobrod (in the background of the invention, column 1, lines 19-32) all show the claimed system with the exception of the prusik hitch. Knots (page 7, Prusik hitches), Ascherin at 90, and Krammerer (background of the invention) all teach the use of Prusik hitches as a safety rope grab. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the system of either Wagner or Ostrobrod (background) with a Prusik hitch, in lieu of their rope grab means, to enable an inexpensive safety rope grab device, or the substituted use of one known functionally equivalent element for another.

Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Wagner or Ostrobrod in view of Knots, Ascherin, or Krammerer, as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Van Patten. Van Patten shows a line with a clip 14 forming a loop for anchoring the line. It would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the rope lines of either Wagner or Ostrobrod with a clip to form a loop for anchoring their lines.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Wagner or Ostrobrod in view of Knots, Ascherin, or Krammerer, as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Crawford. Crawford shows a multi-point harness. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide either Wagner or Ostrobrod with a multi-point harness to enhance distribution of the load of a user to the harness.

Applicant's arguments filed 10.23.03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that his Prusik hitch is for arresting a fall, while the prior art is for climbing. The examiner disagree because while the prior art Prusik hitch allows upward movement with respect to a standing rope line, upon a fall the Prusik hitch grabs the standing rope line to prevent downward movement with respect to the standing rope line.

Applicant's election of group I in Paper No. 11 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin C. Chin-Shue whose telephone number is 703-308-2475. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on 703-308-2686. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Alvin C. Chin-Shue
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3634

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